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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-sixth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019
(*Item 3 (b) (ii)*)

Programme 15
Economic and social development in Africa

1. At its 12th meeting, on 7 June 2016, the Committee considered programme 15, Economic and social development in Africa, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019 (A/71/6 (Prog. 15)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the proposed strategic framework, contained in conference room paper E/AC.51/2016/CRP.1/Rev.1.

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Delegations expressed support and appreciation for the programme and commended the overall work of the Economic Commission for Africa.

4. The view was expressed that the proposed strategic framework captured critical areas in which Africa's structural transformation was possible and could be accelerated by ensuring inclusive and sustainable economic and social development. The fact that those priority areas were also articulated in critical regional and global outcomes would give United Nations entities the impetus necessary to address them in an effective and timely manner. It was noted that, in that context, the Commission

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had provided support to member States by focusing on collecting up-to-date and original regional statistics in order to base policy research and advocacy on clear and objective evidence, by promoting policy consensus and by providing meaningful capacity development.

5. Delegations recognized that African countries needed to make progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (para. 15.11). Questions were raised concerning the key elements to be taken into account by national actors and the activities implemented. Clarification was sought on the challenges the Commission encountered in supporting member States, for example, in mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into national policies and strategies.

6. The need to further strengthen the programme was emphasized. Specifically, with regard to subprogramme 1, Macroeconomic policy, indicator of achievement (a) (i) would be considered both measurable and impact-oriented if it were crafted in a manner to reflect the reception by member States of the tools and products put forward. It was proposed that the indicator be drafted following the format of indicators of achievement (a) (i) and (ii) under subprogramme 2, Regional integration and trade, which effectively intended to measure the number of member States that adopted or utilized the Commission's forecasting models, planning tools and knowledge products.

7. Under subprogramme 2, Regional integration and trade, further clarifications were sought on indicator of achievement (a) (ii), specifically on whether there were member States that had still not integrated industrialization into their national development policies and planning frameworks; and the formulation of indicator of achievement (b) (ii), since participation in the Continental Free Trade Area was a strictly political decision.

8. Appreciation was expressed for the manner in which the issue of gender was captured, both under subprogramme 3, Innovations, technologies and management of Africa's natural resources, and as subprogramme 6, Gender and women in development, which showed the commitment of the Commission to further advance gender-related activities. In that connection, clarification was sought on the lack of reference to the gender dimension under subprogramme 1, Macroeconomic policy. The question was raised as to why no reference had been made to the elimination of all forms of violence against women in the strategic framework.

9. Subprogramme 4, Statistics, was considered one of the Commission's strongest areas of work and one in which important progress had been made. In that connection, it was considered that the implementation of the subprogramme would strengthen the capacity of member States to enter the data revolution age and produce, disseminate and use data and statistics to facilitate evidence-based policymaking, planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting. The important role of the regional commissions, in coordination with the United Nations country teams, was underlined in the implementation of activities relating to statistics capacity development at the national level. On the basis of the previous report of the Committee on Contributions (A/70/11), it was pointed out that many African countries still used the 1978 or the 1993 statistical systems. In that connection, clarification was sought on the targets established in the subprogramme to measure member State alignment with the 2008 System of National Accounts.

10. Under component 4, subregional activities in East Africa, of subprogramme 7, Subregional activities for development, emphasis was placed on collaboration with regional and subregional organizations, such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which played a pivotal role in the political and economic development of the region by strengthening coordination at the policy and operational levels. However, it was expressed that modifications to the elements of the strategic framework might be required to reflect the manner in which regional organizations could leverage the resources available from the Commission.

11. The view was expressed that the Commission's flagship publications brought to the foreground issues relating to development in the region.

12. The Commission's programme accountability framework and executive performance management dashboard were considered innovative (para. 15.19). Clarification was sought as to how experiences were shared with other regional commissions and entities, including lessons learned. Questions were raised concerning the data revolution and the accountability framework, and specifically as to how the Commission would work with relevant national, local and regional stakeholders to improve awareness of the data framework and to ensure that data collection was of quality, comparable, harmonized and suitable to the resources available in countries of the region. With regard to the integration of capacity strengthening within a national framework, the question was raised as to whether the Commission had already initiated activities and what had been carried out specifically, and whether guidelines had been provided to member States.

13. Under subprogramme 8, Development planning and administration, specifically indicator of achievement (a) (i), clarification was sought as to how it would be determined whether a member State was carrying out appropriate planning, including what would be considered as appropriate planning. In addition, under indicator of achievement (b) (i), the question was raised as to whether the Commission's recommendations were considered new or enhanced.

14. Delegations noted that most of the proposed indicators of achievement would be measuring the increase in the number of member States carrying out certain activities or using tools provided under the different subprogrammes. In that connection, clarification was sought as to how the Commission would conceptualize those achievements, as it was recognized that not all achievements could be growth-oriented and that some would need to be gauged otherwise. It was also noted that no figures had been provided in the strategic framework to show how achievements would be measured.

Conclusions and recommendations

15. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that, in order to achieve its objective of assisting Member States in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, the programme is realigned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in line with established procedures.**

16. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 15, Economic and social development in Africa, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019, subject to the following modification:**

Overall orientation

New paragraphs 15.10 and 15.11

After paragraph 15.9, insert two new paragraphs, as follows:

"15.10. Structural transformation in Africa's economies remains the highest priority, and industrialization is the top strategy for achieving it in practice. Achieving the African Union's Agenda 2063 and fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals demand a major redesign of growth strategies across the continent.

15.11. The time has never been better for African countries to follow the right path towards sustainable development. In 2015, three landmark global agreements were reached that align well with Africa's need to industrialize by generating greener and more inclusive growth. The Sustainable Development Goals place equality, sustainability and universal basic needs at the heart of our common global economic strategy. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda offers a comprehensive framework for financing Africa's industrialization and structural transformation, with an emphasis on domestic resource mobilization, and the Paris Agreement adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change leads to a shift to low emissions and puts the global economy on course for transforming its energy systems."

Renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly.